

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 5-17, 19, 31, and 35-38 were rejected, claims 20 and 22-30 were allowed, and claims 32-34 were objected to for containing allowable subject matter but being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants thank the Examiner for noting the allowable subject matter in the present application. By this Response, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 8, 14, 15, and 31. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1, 2, 5-17, 19, 20, and 22-38 will remain pending in the present patent application. In light of the foregoing amendments and in view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

In the Office Action, claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants' regard as the invention. Specifically, it was asserted that claim 14 "is unclear since Applicant is claiming two connection assemblies and a connection assembly in claim 8, hence is there three connection assemblies?" See Office Action mailed June 24, 2005, p. 2. Applicants do not agree that claim 14 is "insolubly ambiguous," the requirement for a Section 112, second paragraph, rejection. See *Exxon Research and Engineering Co. v. United States*, 60 U.S.P.Q.2d 1272, 1276 (Fed. Cir. 2001). Nonetheless, Applicants have amended claim 14 to clarify the claimed subject matter and to expedite prosecution of the present application to allowance. In view of these amendments, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the Section 112 rejection of claim 14.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, claims 1, 5-11, 13-19, 31, and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by the Fowler et al. reference (U.S. Patent No. 3,750,643; hereinafter "Fowler"). Additionally, claims 36-38 were rejected under Section 102(b) as anticipated by the Arosio reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,988,697; hereinafter "Arosio").

Applicants, however, respectfully assert that the pending claims are not anticipated by either of these cited references, because these claims recite features not disclosed by the cited references. Anticipation under Section 102 can be found only if a single reference shows exactly what is claimed. *Titanium Metals Corp. v. Banner*, 227 U.S.P.Q. 773 (Fed. Cir. 1985). For a prior art reference to anticipate under Section 102, every element of the claimed invention must be identically shown in a single reference. *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 15 U.S.P.Q.2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990). Accordingly, to maintain a proper rejection under Section 102, a single reference must teach each and every element or step of the rejected claim. *Atlas Powder v. E.I. du Pont*, 750 F.2d 1569 (Fed. Cir. 1984). Thus, if the claims recite even one element not found in the cited reference, the reference does not anticipate the claimed invention. In view of this legal precedent, Applicants respectfully submit below that the pending claims recite features not found in any of the cited references.

First Section 102 Rejection

Beginning with the rejection of independent claims 1, 8, 17, and 31 in view of Fowler, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims, as pending, are patentable and in condition for allowance, because Fowler does not disclose all of the features recited therein.

Independent Claims 1 and 8 and the Claims Depending Therefrom

For example, Applicants respectfully submit that Fowler does not disclose a “hollow body configured to route a fluid therethrough,” as is recited in amended independent claim 1. In stark contrast, Fowler relates to a latching mechanism 50 for a traditional or microwave oven that is designed to *contain*—not route therethrough—a heated air current. Fowler states that “[t]his invention was specifically designed for a door latching system for a microwave oven.” *See* Fowler, col. 1, ll. 5-6. Moreover, Fowler states that “[i]t is imperative that a microwave oven have its oven door latched during its operation so as to *prevent the leakage* of microwave energy from the oven cooking cavity.” *See id.* at col. 1, ll. 9-11. Thus, although Fowler describes a latching mechanism 50, it is clear that the oven to which the latching mechanism 50 is coupled is neither hollow nor configured to route fluid therethrough. Indeed, the oven cooking cavity 13 of

he Fowler device is intended to contain heated air, making it antithetical to the hollow body configured to route fluid therethrough recited in amended independent claim 1.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that Fowler does not disclose a “body having a first open end and a second open end opposite the first end,” as recited in amended independent claim 8. As discussed above, the oven assembly of Fowler is designed to maintain heated air within the oven cooking cavity 13. Accordingly the latch mechanism 50 of Fowler is coupled to an oven that has only one opening, which is selectively sealed by the oven door 14. Thus, Fowler does not disclose a body having *first and second open ends* that are opposite one another.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Fowler does not disclose a preconditioned air connector having all of the features recited in amended independent claims 1 and 8 and their respective dependent claims. With the foregoing in mind, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 2, and 5-16.

Independent Claim 17 and the Claim Depending Therefrom

Additionally, Applicants respectfully assert that Fowler does not disclose all of the features recited in independent claim 17. For example, Fowler does not disclose a “hook member *non-rotatably* coupled to the body,” as recited in this claim. (Emphasis added.) In stark contrast, the Fowler device’s door sensor bar 74, which carries the hook portion 98, must *pivot* with respect to the oven cooking cavity 13 and oven assembly to which it is coupled. Indeed, Fowler describes the operation of the latch mechanism 50: “movement of the latch handle 86 from right to left in Figure 2 causes the latch lever 82 to move in a counterclockwise direction such that the cam slot 80 exerts a pressure on the pin 76 that extends through both the door sensor bar and the latching bolt 70 causing the sensor bar and the latching bolt as a unit to move in a *clockwise* direction generally about the pivot pin 72.” See Fowler, col. 4, l. 63 to col. 5, l. 2 (emphasis added). Thus, it is clear that the alleged hook member (i.e., door sensor bar 74) of

Fowler is *rotatably* coupled to the alleged body and, thus, antithetical to the claimed subject matter.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Fowler does not disclose all of the features recited in amended independent claim 17 and, thus, does not anticipate this claim. With the foregoing in mind, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of independent claim 17 and its respective dependent claim 19.

Independent Claim 31 and the Claims Depending Therefrom

Additionally, Applicants respectfully submit that Fowler does not disclose all of the features recited in amended independent claim 31. For example, Fowler does not disclose a “non-pivotable hook member,” as is recited in this claim. Instead, as is discussed above, the alleged hook-member of Fowler (i.e., the door sensor bar 74) must *pivot* with respect to the oven assembly to operate. Again, as is best illustrated by comparing FIGS. 2 and 4 of Fowler, the door sensor bar 74 clearly pivots in response to actuation of the latch handle 86. Accordingly, Fowler does not disclose a method in which *a non-pivotable hook member* is involved.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Fowler does not disclose all of the features recited in amended independent claim 31 and, as such, does not anticipate this claim. With the foregoing in mind, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of independent claim 31 and its respective dependent claims 32-35.

Second Rejection Under Section 102

Additionally, Applicants respectfully disagree with the assertion that Arosio anticipates independent claim 36 and its respective dependent claims. For example, Arosio does not anticipate independent claim 36 because, among other features, it does not disclose a preconditioned air connector “wherein actuation of the first and second actuation members generally tangential to the body and in *opposite directions with respect to one another* drives the first and second securing members in an axial direction with respect to the body.” (Emphasis

added.) Instead, Arosio discloses a *single* lever 78, the pivotal movement of which effectuates axial movement of the female halves 2. *See* Arosio, Fig. 1. However, nothing in Arosio suggests the use of *two actuation members*, let alone two actuation members that move in opposite directions with respect to one another to effectuate movement of another pair of elements in a *single axial direction*, as recited in the instant claim.

Therefore, Arosio does not disclose all of the feature recited in claim 36 and, as such, does not anticipate this claim. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of claim 36 and its respective dependent claims 37 and 38.


Claim Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action, dependent claims 2 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of Fowler. Applicants, however, respectfully submit that these dependent claims are patentable not only by virtue of their respective dependencies on allowable base claims, which are discussed above, but also by virtue of the additional features recited therein. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of dependent claims 2 and 12.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims should be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the Examiner wishes to resolve any other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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